

# **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

## **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE: 6 JUNE 2000**

### **PROPERTY RELATED BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

#### **Report by Director of Development Services**

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To recommend for approval an outline programme of property related business development projects for East Ayrshire.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Experience since the Council has been formed shows that most businesses considering a new investment look for ready built factory or office space which suits their purpose. The availability of good quality accommodation across a range and locations is a key factor in attracting investment.
- 2.2 Since its formation the Council has promoted property related business development projects in partnership with other public agencies and private developers at Dalmellington, Cumnock and Kilmarnock. A number of other projects are under active consideration.
- 2.3 The programme outlined in this report would draw these projects together with the overall aim of increasing the scale of property related business development activity in East Ayrshire, by attracting an increased level of funding from public sector partner agencies and private developers.

## **3 OBJECTIVES OF PROGRAMME**

- 3.1 The objectives of the proposed programme will be to:
- Rebuild the business base of East Ayrshire through public/private partnership developments
  - Draw on the growth of new industries, particularly office and service sector business, which are experiencing rapid growth in the central belt of Scotland
  - Capitalise on the new communications now programmed, in particular the M77
  - Meet the established demand for good quality properties across a range of sizes and locations

- Take advantage of the reductions in locational disadvantage as a result of developments in our technology and the Internet
- Provide a focus for support by Enterprise Ayrshire, the Scottish Executive and the European Union in the context of the new Economic Framework for Scotland and the new EU Objective 2 Programme.

3.2 The programme of property related projects will complement the direct support available to businesses through advice and financial assistance from the Council and its partner organisations including EABP, the Kilmarnock Town Centre Management Initiative, SEA (Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire) and the Scottish Executive.

#### 4 PROPOSED PROGRAMME

4.1 **Coalfield Communities:** Small business units are currently under construction at Main Street, Dalmellington. Initial consideration has been given to establishment of a business and training centre in Auchinleck. There may be scope for working with IMEX to improve the accommodation available at Lugar. Further projects will be considered for Muirkirk, New Cumnock and Drongan.

4.2 **Glaisnock Shopping Centre, Cumnock:** Preliminary discussions have been held on upgrading or replacement of the Glaisnock Shopping Centre. This would be combined with redevelopment of the surrounding area. It is envisaged that business accommodation suitable for small scale call centre operations or similar uses would be included in this development.

4.3 **Caponacre Industrial Estate, Cumnock:** Consideration will be given to conversion of redundant premises into units more suitable for current business requirements. The current occupancy of the Estate stands at 94%.

4.4 **Templeton Strategic Site, Auchinleck:** The local plan identifies a potential new strategic industrial site at the north end of Auchinleck.

4.5 **Irvine Valley Business Centre:** Through the Newmilns Townscape Heritage Initiative the Council is involved in a major upgrade to the centre of Newmilns. It is envisaged that this should be complemented by the development of a new business centre in one of the Valley towns.

4.6 **Ballochmyle Opportunity Site:** The site of the Ballochmyle Hospital, which will shortly become fully available, provides an opportunity for a "campus" style business development.

4.7 **Moorfield Industrial Zone:** Feasibility work is at an advanced stage on creation of a new industrial area to the north of the A71, as identified in the local plan. This will be integrated with continuous development of the original Moorfield

estate and other areas identified in the local plan for business and commercial development.

- 4.8 **Queen's Drive Commercial Zone:** In partnership with G&M Estates East Ayrshire Council is developing sites on the east of Queen's Drive for a range of commercial uses. These may include office developments. It is envisaged that later phases will include enhanced sports facilities forming an integrated sports park.
- 4.9 **Kilmarnock Town Centre Office Development:** A major project will be considered for the construction of a new office development within Kilmarnock Town Centre designed to offer a competitive alternative to businesses considering relocating in Glasgow and other city centres.
- 4.10 **Local Business Centres, Kilmarnock:** Feasibility work is being carried out on the establishment of a business centre linked to a new community facility at Long park. It is envisaged that if this is successful a similar project might be developed for the Shortlees area.
- 4.11 **Titchfield Street Commercial Area:** Consideration will be given to securing redevelopment of vacant sites in the Titchfield Street area, possibly for a factory outlet or similar development.
- 4.12 **John Finnie Street:** Initial stages to secure redevelopment of the derelict properties at the north end of John Finnie Street have been undertaken. Redevelopment is likely to incorporate a significant element of housing, but it may also include commercial units.
- 4.13 **Rowallan Business Park:** Continues development of the successful Rowallan Business Park.
- 4.14 **Rowallan Single User Site:** A site for a major inward investor is identified in the local plan to the north east of existing business park. This has been the subject of extensive vetting by Locate in Scotland.
- 4.15 **Bellfield High Amenity Site:** A site is identified in the local for a high amenity development, possibly for a substantial headquarters.
- 4.16 **Small-scale Projects:** Smaller scale projects to maintain and enhance the Council's portfolio of industrial and commercial properties will continue to be implemented on a case by case basis.

## 5 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- 5.1 Each individual project will be promoted as opportunities arise to secure partners. For this reason some of the above projects are at a more advanced stage than others. This will continue to be the case throughout implementation.

5. In order, however, to maximise the potential support from other development agencies and private developers it is proposed to undertake the development of a more comprehensive programme. This implementation plan will include the following:

- An outline brief for each project indicating potential funding partners  
.Impact of jobs in the local economy
- Preliminary discussions, without commitment, with potential partners for each project
- Testing of demand for the programme as a whole and individual components  
.Presentations to public sector development partners and potential private investment institutions
- Full feasibility studies and marketing of individual projects as partnership opportunities

## **6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The Council has limited resources available for promoting property related business developments. It can, however, operate, as it has to date, as an important catalyst in bringing both public sector and private sector parties together. It will, therefore, be essential to secure external funding for all projects within the proposed programme. Council contributions to individual projects will be considered on a case by case basis.

## **7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The legal implications of each individual project will be considered on a case by case basis.

## **8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- (a) approve the property related business development programme outlined in Section 4 above;
- (b) authorise the Director of Development Services to arrange for feasibility studies and other preliminary discussions as outlined in the Implementation Plan at Section 5 above; and

- (c) note that individual projects will be brought back to the committee for consideration before any commitment is made to the implementation of each project.

**Stephen Chorley**  
**Director of Development Services**  
**1 June 2000**  
**SC/JR**

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**Nil**

For further information on the contents of this report, please contact Stephen Chorley, Director of Development Services, on 01563 576011.